The Role of Multi-Agency Meetings

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This document will clarify the role of Multi-Agency Meetings in relation to Local Integrated Assessment & Planning (LIAP) Procedures.
Multi-Agency Meetings

Multi-Agency Meetings can be used to refer a new case or consider an old case that involves new issues. Multi-Agency Meetings should not be used to discuss cases already within the LIAP system and other avenues available in the LIAP procedures, to share concerns or access support, should be used as and when required and in particular to avoid any unnecessary delays.

PRINCIPLES

The approach to Multi-Agency Meetings should be based on the aims of Education and Social Care which are to:

- Support, enable and encourage people to achieve positive outcomes
- Ensure prevention and early intervention
- Share and use information openly and fully
- Create a culture of evidence based practice
- Ensure accessible, consistent and equitable services
- Use resources and target capacity appropriately and efficiently
- Practise effective working with other organisations
- Engage and involve people through effective communication
- Encourage a culture which values and respects human dignity

At all times, any Multi-Agency Meeting must ensure compliance with all aspects of Data Protection law and interagency policies and procedures on data protection. In particular:

- any information shared should be on a need to know basis
- participants should share no more information than is essential
- there should always be a legitimate aim for sharing any information
- parents and/or young persons should know what information is being shared with whom and for what purpose and consent to this.

INTERFACE WITH CHILD PROTECTION

In any case in which the concern could include child protection (ie a child may be at risk of significant harm) it is possible, and on occasions, essential, to proceed without consent in commencing multiagency discussions in line with Child Protection Procedures, but with the reasons for doing this being clearly recorded in terms of a child’s safety. For guidance on this refer to Moray’s IRD Procedures.

In the unlikely event that child protection issues are brought to, or raised during a general multi-agency meeting, care must be taken that participants have a legitimate reasons to participate in any discussion that may occur.
GUIDELINES

The following guidelines are therefore offered to support the aims stated above and to protect participants by ensuring compliance with data protection.

1. Any case discussed at the Multi-Agency Meeting should refer to a new case or to an old case which involves a new issue i.e. Multi-Agency Meetings should not be used as a platform to discuss cases already existing within the LIAP system.

2. Disclosable information by the agency raising the concern should be restricted to:
   - Name & address of child/ family
   - How and when consent was obtained and by whom
   - Nature of the concern – brief and disclosed with agreement of the family who also know to whom the information will be disclosed.

3. An explanation should be given as to why it has been reasonable to wait for this meeting rather than utilise other avenues within the LIAP procedures.

4. Other agencies present may at this point express an interest in the case.

5. Next steps should be agreed and recorded in Action Minute that goes only to agencies at (4) for their records.

   The Action Minute proforma should contain:
   - Name & address of child/ family
   - How consent has been obtained and by whom
   - Nature of the concern
   - Agencies to be involved
   - Next steps
   - Who will feedback to family

6. It will be the responsibility of the Chair to ensure that the Action Minute is distributed appropriately and followed through.